

VISION 2020 ENVIRONMENT TASK GROUP: SUSTAINABLE ARLINGTON

Minutes of the January 16, 2014 meeting

Town Hall Annex, 1st flr

Facilitator: Gail McCormick

Minutes: Brucie Moulton

In attendance: DeAnne Dupont, Ryan Katofsky, Gail McCormick, Brucie Moulton, Janice Paré, Scott Samenfeld, Margo Woods

The meeting opened with introductions. Visitor Margo Woods, a former Vision 2020 member, is currently a student in the Harvard Institute for Learning in Retirement program. Her class is developing a case study of three Massachusetts towns (Arlington, Gloucester, and Sudbury) that became Green Communities under the State's 2008 Green Communities Act.

Minutes of the December meeting will be reviewed and approved at the February 19 meeting.

Committee Updates.

Energy Working Group (EWG). Ryan Katofsky reported on substantial energy efficiency upgrades which have been completed to Town buildings and operations, funded in part through two grants (ca. \$220,000 and \$250,000) received from the Green Communities Program. Among the upgrades: LED street lights, new high efficiency boilers, replacing window air conditioners with much more efficiency rooftop units.

Also announced at the most recent EWG meeting: the Town's new part-time Energy Manager Ruthie Bennett has arranged for a free and much-needed energy audit of Town Hall. A \$15,000 grant has been received to pay for an owner's agent to help procure solar panels (PV) for Town buildings. Another recent grant will pay the Town to install two electric vehicle charging stations which will be accessible to the public and pay up to \$7500 towards the purchase of an electric vehicle for Town use. A pilot program looking at energy use by the Town's two Information Technology departments is expected to result in substantial improvements to energy efficiency through reconfiguring space and upgrading air conditioning which is essential to IT operations. Employee comfort will improve as well.

Website. Scott Samenfeld reported what he needs in order to insert links to the Food Recovery Project and Climate Change News at the top of Sustainable Arlington's homepage (see sustainablearlington.org). These important projects need to be immediately visible to anyone visiting the website.

Massachusetts Climate Action Network (MCAN). MCAN is currently searching for a new Executive Director.

MCAN's annual conference presented with Toxics Action Center is called "Local Environmental Action 2014." It will be held March 2 at Northeastern University. Sustainable Arlington is a

conference co-sponsor, so SA members get discounted tickets. Conference info and registration is through Toxics Action Center website.

Outreach. Vision 2020 will be doing public outreach on behalf of all the task groups during the next couple of months in conjunction with the annual survey collection period. Sustainable Arlington needs to activate its own outreach efforts. Janice Paré offered to assist Brucie Moulton on outreach.

Food Recovery Project. The value of food collected for redistribution is expected to reach the \$1 million mark in a couple of months. Through its collaboration last fall with Arlington's True Story Theater, the Food Recovery Project received \$2,000 in grant money from the b. good family foundation. \$1,000 will go toward the filing fee to become a nonprofit organization. \$1,000 will cover writing a manual to help other groups start up similar programs.

EcoFest. This year's title is "Rethink Recycling! Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose." Gail McCormick received a \$500 grant from the Arlington Cultural Council to conduct a t-shirt repurposing workshop related to EcoFest. There are three workshops in development to be held at different locations. Workshop participants will have an opportunity to display their creations at EcoFest on March 29, 10 – 2 p.m.

Elections for Sustainable Arlington were postponed as several key members were absent. We need to discuss having a treasurer.

MA Ave. Corridor Project. Discussion centered on ways that Sustainable Arlington could help support East Arlington businesses during construction. It was agreed to contact the Chamber of Commerce and East Arlington Livable Streets in writing to discuss this further.

New Business. Long-time member Ryan Katofsky is concerned that Sustainable Arlington needs to work harder to attract younger participants. He also feels there's been a loss of focus since completing 2012's very successful Solarize Arlington program. Discussion followed about ways to participate in the Master Planning process that would increase the focus on adapting to and/or mitigating local impacts of climate disruption.

It was noted that SA has focused on leading the planning efforts for Arlington EcoFest over the last two years in collaboration with the DPW, Planning Department, Arlington Tree Committee and Garden Club. SA now also co-sponsors the Minuteman Parents Association Food Recovery Project and provides several regular volunteer.

Sustainable Arlington's 2014 Meeting Dates

Jan. 16, Feb. 19*, March 20, April 17, May 15, June 18*,
July 17, Aug. 20*, Sept. 18, Oct. 15*, Nov. 13, Dec. 18*

* All meetings will be held in the Town Hall Annex, 1st floor conference room **except those with an *** which will be **in the 2nd flr. conf. rm.**

As approved at the Feb. 19, 2014 meeting.